Southern Pacific Bulletin

APRIL 1927

Only the finest products are used on Southern Pacific dining cars. Georgia White, of the West Oakland Commissary, is shown in the center picture, sampling the season's first strawberries and displaying some of the early spring fruits and vegetables purchased for the dining cars. Mildred Simmons, another Southern Pacific girl, is weighing eggs to see that a dozen reach the required 24 ounces, which is first grade. The milch cows are typical of those on the highest grade dairies from which the Company obtains its milk supply, and the little girls are evidently enjoying the sample.

World's Finest Products for S. P. Dining Cars

THE care taken by Southern Pacific's commissary department to obtain the very best possible products is probably no better demonstrated than in the purchase of eggs. To many people eggs may seem to be—just eggs, and the average housekeeper has no way to determine the quality of the eggs she uses other than the word of the grocer.

Every article of food purchased and distributed by the Commissary must pass the most rigid tests for freshness. No matter how recently removed from the nest, eggs do not find their way into passengers' omelets until thoroughly inspected and found up to standard.

From nest to table in twenty-four hours is the rule. The eggs served on company dining cars this morning were gathered yesterday on some sanitary and frequently inspected chicken ranch. They were laid by fowl fed on specified rations, housed and cared for in a regulation manner and meeting the highest standards as to breed.

What is a fresh egg?

Nobody, apparently, knew until aided by scientists of the University of California, the commissary department worked out a method of solving the problem.

Every week samples of all egg purchases are sent to the laboratories of the University where they receive the equivalent of an X-ray diagnosis. Each egg is "candled"—passed in front of a light that exposes the condition of the white and yolk to the examiner.

Eggs are sealed by the hen. The shell, however, is porous and air begins to seep in immediately after the egg is laid.

Day-old eggs, the scientists working with Southern Pacific discovered, have very little air in them, this air content increasing slowly as the egg ages. Repeated experiments disclosed that expansion of the daily-growing air-space is constant, so that it was possible to tell by this space just how many days old the egg really was.

After "candleing" the eggs are tested for appearance and quality. If the yolk and white fall apart instead of being firm and cohesive, the egg is discarded as being "weak." Such eggs, while thev may be perfectly fresh, are useless for poaching and have little food value.

An egg must taste right and look right. The best quality of eggs are laid by hens fed on hard cereals and cooked foods, the feed having much to do with egg quality and appearance.

Equally great care is taken in the purchase of milk, cream and butter. Dairy products used on Southern Pacific dining cars come from selected herds, through dairies known by constant state and government inspection, to be sanitary and efficient. While the state of California requires that cream have a 22 per cent butterfat content, the cream handled by the commissary runs up to and exceeds 25 per cent butterfat. These products, too, are tested weekly in the University laboratories.

Quality, not price, is the decisive factor in all commissary purchases. Especially is this so in the instance of meats. Every day commissary buyers visit packing houses. They inspect hundreds of beeves, sheep and hogs, selecting the prime portions of meat on which they place the commissary stamp. Only the very finest cuts to be found are served to dining car patrons.

Other commissary buyers daily visit the great producing centers and the markets in San Francisco, Los Angeles and Portland, examining thousands of cases of fruits and vegetables in order to secure the very finest and freshest products.

It is safe to say that nowhere else are such pains taken to secure the very best. So far as commissary officials are aware no other company, hotel or railroad, has such an efficient and thorough method of inspecting the foods that pass through its refrigerators and storage rooms.

Although all purchases are made by specialists, every item received daily at a commissary is closely inspected once and sometimes several times.

With principal commissaries located

at West Oakland, Los Angeles and New Orleans and branch commissaries in Portland, El Paso, San Antonio and Houston, Southern Pacific operates 140 dining cars, 26 all-day lunch cars, 37 club and observation cars, 16 ferryboat restaurants, seven station restaurants and hotels and 10 railway clubs.

Meals for 7,098,420

During 1926 railroad patrons disposed of 7,098,420 meals—enough food to feed every man, woman and child in the city of Los Angeles for four days and still have some left over.

At West Oakland, Los Angeles, and in the San Francisco steamer commissary extensive kitchens and bake shops are maintained for preparation of foods used on dining cars, ferryboats and river steamers. In addition to assuring superior and uniform quality these departments lighten the work of chefs on dining cars and boats.

The largest kitchen and bakeshop is in the San Francisco steamer commissary. It is a modern plant, equipped with the very latest apparatus, such as electric ovens and mixers, refrigerating machinery for the great cooling compartments in which perishable supplies are stored, and many other mechanical aids for the preparation of fine foods.

In this kitchen mayonnaise and other dressings and sauces are prepared and issued to dining cars in sealed glass containers. Here, too, in novel blending machines that go far to remove guess-work from bread and biscuit making, shortening, flour and other ingredients are blended in dry mixtures which require only the addition of water—directions are printed on each package—to make the dough and batter needed for all hot cakes, hot breads and biscuits served on dining cars.

Thousands of Pies

Doughnuts, pies, meat pies and cakes used on ferryboats are prepared in daily thousands, one electric pie oven having a capacity of 1500 pies daily.

During 1925 this kitchen alone produced 547,500 pounds of blended flours, 18,000 quarts of mayonnaise dressing, 33,000 quarts of baked prunes, 92,500 dozen doughnuts, 73,000 loaves of bread, 105,500 pies, 12,500 pounds of cookies, 5,475 large cakes and 312,000 cuts of coffee cake.

Butcher shops are maintained at West Oakland and Los Angeles commissaries, where various meat products are manufactured. Meat is purchased in wholesale quantities and cut to standard sizes for issuance to dining cars.

The celebrated Southern Pacific fresh pork sausages, famous among all experienced travelers, are prepared at West Oakland, together with head cheese and other popular specialties. Here, too, a smokehouse is operated to produce the unusually finely flavored bacon, tongues, frankfurters and other smoked meats used on dining cars.

During 1926 the West Oakland butcher shop produced 13,865 pounds of bacon, 224,075 pounds of sausages, 59,411 pounds of tongue and 13,655 pounds of head cheese.

Housewives, students and anyone interested are invited to visit any of the Company's commissaries, where someone in charge will be glad to explain the various activities.

Contrary to popular belief, dining cars are operated at a great loss. This is due to the peculiar conditions of operation. A high standard of service, comparable to that offered by first class hotels, is maintained, and at menu rates far below city prices. These prices are fixed so as to be within the reach of all classes of travelers. In addition to this factor, the cost of operation of a diner per dollar of receipts far exceeds the cost of fine restaurants.

Other operating costs are excessive, due to conditions under which dining cars must operate. For instance, breakage of dishes amounts to nearly two cents per meal.

The cost of ice is enormous, particularly in summer, as there are many ice boxes on the car. Everything must be kept properly iced. The meltage in hot weather will average one ton per day per car.

Loss on Each Meal

The loss in 1926 was 24 cents for each meal served, excluding car repair expenses. The following tabulation shows further detail:

	Cents	Cents
Average receipts per meal		92.94
Commissary Expenses.	Cents	
Food	45.54	
Crew wages	40.96	
Fuel, ice and water	5.85	
Laundry and maintenance of linen	6.29	
Crockery and glassware	1.85	
Other expenses	16.14	
Total		116.63
Net loss per meal served		23.69

Common belief that it is expensive to eat in dining cars falls before this fact that the average meal served costs less than 95 cents.

Savory foods, well cooked and appetizingly prepared may run up financial losses, but they make lasting friends for the company. Agents soliciting passenger business find the Southern Pacific dining car one of their best assets. Just as famous restaurants attracted thousands to such cities as New Orleans, New York and San Francisco in the old days when food connoisseurs "lived to eat," Southern Pacific dining car service is attracting and can be made to attract thousands of patrons to Southern Pacific lines.

OPEN NEW TICKET OFFICE TO PATRONS IN NEW YORK

Southern Pacific Lines opened on March 1 an uptown passenger and ticket office at 531 Fifth Avenue, corner of 44th Street, New York City, for the convenience of those who desire to travel either by rail or boat to the vast territory it serves. The appointments of the new office, on the ground floor of the Central Mercantile Bank Building, where the old Delmonico restaurant once stood, are outstanding even among similar headquarters established by other railroads in the theatrical, hotel, residential and shopping districts.

H. H. Gray

W. J. Hanrahan, city passenger and ticket agent, will be in charge of the office under supervision of Hugh H. Gray, newly-appointed general agent, Passenger Department in New York City. He will be assisted by J. J. Carroll and J. E. Finegan, assistant ticket agents; Miss R. Dymes, cashier; J. J. Rubano, messenger; and G. Kirnon, porter.

Establishment by the Southern Pacific of its uptown ticket office will facilitate greatly obtaining travel information, completing travel arrangements and making reservations. Southern Pacific Lines patrons and friends from territory served by its lines are cordially invited to make full use of this office; to receive mail, meet friends there, etc.

Mr. Gray, who became general agent on February 15, started with the Company as assistant ticket agent at Chicago in October, 1912, after three years' service with other lines. In a few months he became city ticket agent, which position he held until April, 1918. He was out of the service for a few months, returning as passenger agent at New Orleans in August, 1918. Other appointments have been: city passenger agent, Chicago, February, 1920; district passenger agent, Chicago, October, 1922; general agent, Kansas City, August, 1923; assistant general passenger agent, New Orleans, January, 1924.

ELECTRIC MEN GIVEN FIRST AID DEMONSTRATION

Demonstrations showing the proper method of using the Shaeffer Prone Method of Resuscitation from the effect of electric shock are being given before groups of employes on East Bay Electric Lines by Chief Operator J. Johanson.

On the afternoon of February 17 one of these demonstrations was given in the waiting room at Oakland Pier and was attended by 175 employes of the Line Department, Signal Department, as well as many train and engine men. Johanson previously demonstrated this method before the mechanical men at West Alameda and has some very efficient teams in the Fruitvale Power House who are required to demonstrate their efficiency each week.

It is such lively interest as evidenced at these demonstrations that has been largely responsible for the East Bay Electric Division winning the safety banner in the years 1922-23-24-26 by making a better record in safety than any steam division.